



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE MUSICAL TIMES, And Singing Class Circular.

AUGUST 1st, 1861.

MUSICAL EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION,

By Dr. MARX, of Berlin.*

(Concluded from page 69.)

OBJECTS OF MUSICAL EDUCATION AND THEIR TIME. THE PIANOFORTE.

After singing, the command of the pianoforte is our most essential qualification, and among us is so considered. The piano is the only instrument, excepting the scarcely accessible organ, on which melody and harmony, and the rich web of combined and simultaneous voices or parts, can be produced with accuracy and almost unlimited magnificence of effect. It is also highly adapted to accompanying song, and to conducting. From these advantages it has happened, that for this single instrument more masterpieces have been written, since the time of Seb. Bach up to Beethoven, than for all other instruments put together. Most songs have been composed with accompaniment for that instrument—organ parts can be transferred without any change—and whatever quartet and orchestral music found favour with the public, was immediately presented to pianoforte players in the form of arrangements, &c. Therefore, no branch of practice can promise so rich a harvest as piano playing; and it must be acknowledged, that, without so abundant a field, any extended acquaintance with our musical literature would be scarcely possible to the world in general. To the composer this instrument is nearly indispensable, partly on the foregoing grounds, and partly because no other is so appropriate, both for exercising and exciting his own imagination and for proving the effect of many-part compositions. It is equally important to the conductor and to the singing master. Even its defects are advantages to musical education, and particularly to the composer. The pianoforte is greatly inferior to bowed and wind instruments in inward feeling and power of *tone* or quality of sound, in the power of sustaining a *tone* in equality of force, in crescendo or in diminuendo, in melting two or more *tones* into each other, and in gliding imperceptibly from the one to the other, all which so admirably succeeds on bowed instruments. The piano does not fully satisfy the ear: its performance, compared to that of bowed and wind instruments, is in a manner colourless, and its effect, in comparison with the splendence of an orchestra, is as a drawing to a painting. But exactly on this account the piano moves more powerfully the creative faculty of both player and

hearer; for it requires their assistance to complete and colour, to give full significance to that which is but spiritually indicated. Thus imagination fosters the new idea, and penetrates therewith to our hearts; while other instruments immediately seize, and move, and satisfy the senses, and by their means attack the feelings more powerfully, perhaps, in a sensuous direction, but not so fruitfully in the soul. This is probably the chief reason why the piano has become the especial instrument for spiritually musical education, and particularly for composition; since other instruments easily overcome their votaries, whom they seduce into their own instrumental peculiarities, and create a one-sided mannerism in their productions.

For the earliest instruction, also, the piano has the advantage (good tuning being supposed) of presenting to the pupil correct *tones*, and a clear insight into the tonic system by the key-board.

But just from this point arises the important quality of the instrument, which may be perilous to all the real advantages derived from it, unless it be sedulously counteracted; and this, we must confess, is at present but little thought of—nay, indeed, that dangerous quality is speculated on, and an entirely false system of education is built on it for outward show, through whose apparent advantages even the true artistic education is represented in a false light, as ignorant and baneful. Since the pianoforte has its fixed *tones* provided, it is easier to play upon this instrument than upon any other, without any internal feeling of correctness of *tone*, or even without hearing, and to arrive at a certain degree of mechanical dexterity. How often do we meet ready piano players, who, from want of a cultivated feeling of *tone*, are incapable of singing a correct succession of *tones*, or of imagining it, who have no clear notion of what they are playing—nay, who in reality hear nothing correctly! How many bravura players might one name, to whom the artistic meaning of a simple movement remains a sealed book, and who therefore perform the greatest and the least compositions, with assumption and vanity indeed, but without inward participation—without awakening joy in themselves or in their audience, but merely a fruitless astonishment at their technical cleverness! And how deep has this perversion of art into dead mechanism penetrated into artistic life! Whoever has an opportunity of observing many students of music and their teachers, cannot conceal from himself that at present, particularly in large towns devoted to vanity and fashion, the greater part of the pianoforte students are in this manner led astray; and that a great part of the teachers are themselves ignorant of the right path, or otherwise have not the courage to oppose the stream of fashion, or the allurements of example and personal advantage.

If, however, satisfactory instruction is not to be expected from all masters, nor every student is to

* Reprinted by permission from Novello's Library for the diffusion of Musical Knowledge. Vol. II. Dr. Marx's *General Musical Instruction*; translated by George Macrone.

hope for the choice of a good master, there remains still a tolerably sure method of guarding against this wide-spread evil. It consists in rigidly examining the work, which is exacted from the pupil, in the pupil himself, and his parents or preceptor insisting absolutely that the teacher shall furnish really profitable work; or if that cannot be secured with certainty, in seeking immediately another teacher more trustworthy to his art.

We have already said that the pianoforte possesses an extremely voluminous literature, partly written expressly for it, and partly adaptations from other works foreign to it. What can be more natural or more enlightening than to make these works the chief means of instruction, their complete possession being one of the objects of pursuit. For this end, technical readiness, finger exercises, and studies are required. But these are manifestly only means to an end; and as certainly as their use ought not to be delayed, so certainly also they ought to be set aside when the required dexterity has been gained, and the principal difficulties overcome; or else, from a want of methodical arrangement, exercises may be prolonged without end. We cannot conceal from ourselves that in these latter times this error has been stretched to excess, and has overwhelmed us with countless studies, &c. Every respectable teacher, every distinguished amateur, considers himself bound to present the world with some dozens of studies, from which a few particular artistic forms of fingering are to be acquired. And since the composition of a well-sounding study exacts nothing but the occurrence of an idea to be worked in the ordinary routine of composition; since, moreover, a little burst of enthusiasm is highly thought of in these matters; and, further, since the brilliant playing of the author, or the reputation of his master, renders him tolerably sure of his public, we can never tell when this composition and spread of studies will come to an end: neither, indeed, can we imagine how the pupil shall find time to labour through the most respectable of them only; to say nothing of the real works of art themselves, for whose sake alone the whole drudgery has been endured.

Let the non-musical inquirer consider the foregoing as a token of good and bad instruction in the question before us.

Sebastian Bach and Handel, Joseph Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven—these are the artists to whom we owe the greatest and the most numerous works of art for the pianoforte. Among these, Bach and Beethoven stand forward, the one in elder, the other in our own times, as those who have reached the highest eminence. After them, Emanuel Bach, Clementi, Dussek, Karl Maria von Weber, Hummel, and many more may be named. We abstain from giving a more numerous list, particularly of those still living, as it is not the province of this work to pass judgment upon individuals. Upon the highest, the vast prepon-

derance in estimation of the five first-named artists, there is not the slightest question among those who have the least tincture of art. The one may indeed be compared with the other, but the high preeminence of all is unquestioned.

We can therefore declare as a condition for good pianoforte teaching, that the works of those five eminent men* shall be considered as the distinguished and governing lessons in the instruction. Whatever finger exercises, hand lessons or secondary work, a teacher may find necessary for his pupil, must be left to his decision, as it cannot be estimated. But the teacher who does not conduct his pupil into the study of the five great masters, as soon as it can be done with any precision, and the time of the lesson permits it, and does not make them the chief object and goal of the instruction, such a teacher, we say it without hesitation, is not able to give a true artistic education, however clever and careful he may be in other parts of his duty. Teachers who keep their pupils to fashionable dances, and such trifles, to arrangements from favorite operas, &c., are altogether unworthy of the confidence of those who seek for genuine education in art. Therefore, no teacher ought to be chosen without the previous knowledge of his method of instruction.

Pianoforte learning may begin very early—in the seventh or eighth year, or even earlier, even before the hand can span the octave. There is, moreover, a sufficiency of excellent works of Haydn and Mozart, well adapted to the sensibilities of that tender age, if the teacher be but capable of choosing them.

COMPOSITION.

We name the study of composition as the third object of general musical education. Deep penetration into art and its productions, a rich development of musical talent, cannot be attained without this study. If it be undertaken in the right sense, it rewards every step forwards with clearer insight and increased pleasure; and,

* We have to give an urgent warning with respect to Seb. Bach's work, the "Wohltemperirte Klavier," that the younger scholars be not set too early to the study of it; and that neither they nor others should be persuaded that everything that that great man has composed—often composed for the momentary objects of instruction, &c.—was of equal value. Bach's manner is so different from the modern style, that we cannot without reflection employ his works. This, and the usual beginning with pianos of the most accustomed temperament, have driven more friends of art from this master than the pleasure of his music has created him admirers; and, therefore, with the greatest veneration in his regard, we will not refuse to acknowledge that another portion of his works, namely his dances, have outlived their time and become antiquated. But the enlightened teacher will find in the six preludes pour les commensans, in the inventions and single fantasias, namely in the English and other suites among the preludes, sarabands, jigs, &c., a rich choice of the most charming and imperishable compositions, most intimately adapted to our tastes and feelings, and highly calculated to produce both pleasure and improvement in his scholars. We would here wish to recommend the new collective edition of Bach's works, at Peter's, in Leipsig. As an Introductory School for conducting from our own time and manner into those of Bach, which are so importantly different, and for primary instruction in polyphonic playing, the Author has published a selection from Seb. Bach's compositions, at Challier's, in Berlin, at 20 Sgr.

The above warning may also apply to Handel, whose works, however, for the piano, are not numerous. We can recommend his Six Fugues and a Capriccio, at Frautwein's, in Berlin, for more advanced students.

indeed, those also who are not destined by peculiar talents, to the profession of composers.

This circumstance demands the more deliberate consideration, the more imperfect and erroneous the representation are which have been attached to it.

Music consists, as can be seen from this book, in an inward comprehension of innumerable most diversified forms, constantly approaching and separating, perpetually combining and dissolving in each other. Their operation can be perceived, more or less, without previous cultivation, and can be understood and represented by a superficial instruction; but to comprehend them entirely, to penetrate into their whole nature and attributions, is to know the meaning and force of each form by itself, and also when in combination with every other. Now, let us imagine a great composition before us, in which different parts are united in the most varied manner, in all sorts of artistic forms, each part having its cantilena, its rhythm, its succession of *tones*, while each *tone* has a determined relation to the *tones* of the other parts, and with all this are combined different degrees and kinds of motion, of *forte* or *piano*, and of manner of performance. Now, we say, with such a composition before us, we presume it will be admitted that without study such a composition could not be understood, and that the study for that object must be thorough, systematic, and methodical.

Let us suppose for a moment that any one unaccustomed to composition undertook the dissection of the above imagined work. Then would he be overwhelmed with an intolerable burden of unities. The completion of his task would be impossible, were it only from the creation of new forms and applications of them which daily takes place in art.

The only ready, practicable, and fruitful procedure is, therefore, to set one's own hand to work, to learn oneself how to bring the forms from out the world of sound, to "call the spirits from the vasty deep;" to learn to feel the rhythm of the forms, so that all present and future forms shall be within our scope and comprehension, because we have grasped the root of their existence—because we know how they have come into existence, and why. This the doctrine of composition teaches us. This science alone gives us, not abstract ideas upon art—not merely superficial notions upon the operations of art—not a few cut out dead parts, but the whole entire, with all its individualities, and in its unity, matter, and spirit, form and meaning, in that single entirety which is the material of true art.

We may add, from a large experience of every age and of both sexes, that the study of composition, without any proportionate loss of time, even for amateurs, most surely rewards every step, even when but small disposition exists in the student, or circumstances should prevent a lengthened pursuit of the subject. The first few

lessons in one-part* compositions will at once awaken the sense for melody, and give a significant idea of its fundamental forms, of the efficacy of rhythm, and of the origin and accumulation of passages and phrases. Already the doctrine so comprehensive and so easily comprehended of the two and two composition in two parts, built upon the natural harmony, makes the foundation of all harmony and tonic progression perfectly obvious, and furnishes to moderately endowed students, pleasurable and exciting lessons. So much can be acquired in two or three weeks, with a couple of lessons a week and but little exertion; and, moreover, we might abandon our studies at this point, without having lost our labour. Then the gradual development of harmony and the richer progression of parts, will have, in the mere inspection, the charm of a perfectly rational and highly copious display, from the most simple fundamental forms and the most obvious laws. But to any one who enters upon this pursuit with inbred activity, to such a one the regions of sound are illumined and extended with every effort,—the sense of music is vivified, excited, and strengthened by every fresh manifestation of the internal art. Now, with the knowledge of the limitation of chords, freedom in the unfolding of art returns, and her play becomes continually richer and more variegated. Then all artistic forms are imagined and explained, the one from the other—the order of the succession being pre-supposed—the one quite as easy as the other, until finally, their realization on determined instruments or in song, in ecclesiastical, dramatic, and other objects of our art, completes the whole study. At any point the study may be relinquished with profit, in proportion to the labor bestowed, if circumstances should so command, or the zeal of the student should not urge him to further investigation.

The study of composition may begin early, particularly with talented and lively children, but not before they have made some progress upon a musical instrument,—if possible the pianoforte, and have thereby gained some participation in and capacity for art, and also more penetration and habit of reflection. They ought at least to have got beyond the elementary exercises, and be able to play with feeling and technical correctness larger works, such as, for example, the sonatas of

* The author has conformed himself here to the tenour and tendency of his Doctrine of Musical Composition (Lehre von der Musikalischen Komposition), at Breitkoff and Härtel. How little can the above assurance be given by the old thorough-bass and doctrine of harmony: how unartistic is it in foundation and method, how extremely incomplete and unsatisfactory. This the author has exemplified from time to time in the Instruction for composition, but more demonstratively in the work "Die alte Musiklehre im Streit mit unsrer Zeit" (the old Doctrine of Music in contention with our times), at Breitkoff and Härtel, 1841,—as had been acknowledged and declared long enough before him by Reicher and every thinking professor of composition. The indolence of so many old masters, or the ignorance of masters absolutely unacquainted with the real nature of composition, is still answerable for the painful and useless labour of many young persons. Many such, indeed, are still enduring in the continually disappointed hope that they will at last, some day, arrive at composition, or at least at a clearer insight into the nature of art; they endure until the time has passed, and with it all pleasure and natural feeling, which either dies away or becomes corrupted.

Haydn and Mozart. Instruction in composition at an earlier period than this would be mere empty playing; or, what is much worse, would disturb, in the still unselfsupporting scholar, the free and immediate enjoyment of the compositions lying before him; and thrust, in the place of lively, soul-inspiring, artistic employment, cold and profitless mechanisms of the understanding. This is one of the greatest errors of a system pursued in many shapes, of instruction in the piano and harmony combined, which apparently advances the students through an intricate mechanism with great rapidity, but at the cost of the feeling of music itself, which remains undeveloped, and becomes, indeed, oppressed and stifled by the disturbance of the understanding, and the mechanism which that system brings into action. The true joy of art and artistic accomplishment becomes the more surely destroyed thereby,—the more deceptive to the observer is the joy of the scholar at his mechanical success,—and the more his sudden progress in certain parts of music is in the beginning inexplicable to the uninstructed.

We consider thus much to be necessary upon general education. The choice of other instruments may be left to each individual, under the advice of the better-informed. The science and history of music must in like manner be left to the disposition and leisure of every friend of art. The composer, and particularly the well-educated musician, will scarcely be able to restrain himself from the history of his art, not merely from books, but from the works of art themselves.

[N.B.—The article "Teachers and Methods of Teaching" was printed in the *Musical Times*, No. 196, June 1859, page 59, Vol. 9; and may be referred to by those who desire to complete the perusal of Dr. Marx's Observations on Musical Education and Instruction.]

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

BRISTOL.—On Thursday, the 27th of June, the Cathedral was re-opened after a long interval, during which it has been closed for the purpose of restoring and renewing the interior. The building has been very greatly improved, and it is now capable of holding from 1000 to 1600 persons, while previously no more than 300 could have been accommodated. The organ has been enlarged considerably, and renovated, by Mr. Vowles, of Bristol. The old organ was built by Father Schmidt, a celebrated German organ-builder; it had formerly but two manuals; the choir organ was added some eighty or ninety years ago, but was inferior to the rest of the instrument; it has now been so much altered and added to, that it is almost a new instrument. The musical services were very satisfactorily performed, under the direction of the organist, Mr. Corfe, who played with his characteristic skill.

BRYANSTON HALL, PORTMAN SQUARE.—On Tuesday evening, July 2nd, a Concert was given by the members of the Bryanston Vocal Choir, under the direction of Mr. H. C. Freeman. The principal vocalists were Mrs. Brooks, Miss Agnes Ward, Mr. Gaskin, and Mr. Freeman, who sang (for the first time) a pretty little ballad of his own composing, which was well received. The instrumental parts were performed by Miss K. Grace and Mr. T. Fogg (pianoforte), Mr. H. Fogg (violin), Mr. H. C. Steedman (violoncello), and Mr. James (flute). The Choir,

numbering about forty, performed their duty in a creditable manner.

CRYSTAL PALACE.—The great juvenile festival of the Tonic Sol-fa Association took place on the 17th ult. The number of children at this gathering amounted to 3500, weighted with about 1000 adult tenors and basses. From this performance, it would appear that greater precision has been attained since the last meeting, as well as superior delicacy. As a musical interpretation, however, the quality of shrillness, which is inevitably associated with so large a proportion of childish voices, remains a defect tending to produce monotony. The fact of so large a number of children being musically educated, and exhibiting such undoubted facility, is a remarkable sign of the progress of the art in this country, and of the seed sown for the future. There is evidently great activity on the part of those favorable to the tonic sol-fa method, and a persistent faith in its efficiency.

DURHAM.—The members of Mr. Hall's Singing Class gave a Concert in the Class-room, Claypath, on Thursday evening, June 20th, when a selection of sacred and secular music, comprising anthems, glees, catches, &c., was performed to a large audience. The Chorus, which numbers 40 persons, was efficiently conducted by Mr. Grieve, and well supported by Mrs. Hall on the pianoforte, and Mr. Hall on the harmonium, to whom much credit is due for his exertions in bringing the class to its present state of efficiency.

GLOSSOP.—A new organ, erected by Mr. Hopkinson, of Birstall, in the Wesleyan Chapel, Glossop, was opened on the 9th and 14th of July by Mr. W. H. Hopkinson, of Birstall. The choir was full and efficient. The instrument, which is a fine one, gives general satisfaction, some of the soft stops being much admired.

GREAT CATWORTH, HUNTINGDONSHIRE.—On Monday evening, July 1st, a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music took place in this town. The performers were members of the Great Catworth Singing Class, now under the training of Mr. Wm. Randall.

HANOVER SQUARE ROOMS.—Miss Annie Elliott's Evening Concert was given on the 28th of June, when she was assisted by Miss Steele, Miss Gray, and Miss Lascelles; Messrs. Morgan, C. Braham, Garcia, and Lefont. Violoncello, M. Pague; and accompanist, M. F. Berger. Miss Elliott commenced the concert by playing a duo with M. Pague; she also performed a piece by Wagner, and one by Kuhe. Her playing was much admired.—The Annual Morning Concert of the Royal Society of Female Musicians, established in 1839 for the relief of its distressed members, took place on the 2nd of July. Madame Lemmens Sherrington, Madame Dolby, Sig. Gardoni, and Sig. Belletti were the principal singers; and there were also Madlles. Stabbach, Hughes, Thomson, Gresham, and Steele, Mr. Tenant and Mr. Thomas. The instrumentalists were Miss Arabella Goddard, Mr. Cusins, Mr. Lazarus, and M. Ole Bull. Conductor, Professor Sterndale Bennett. A concert where so many fine performers gave their assistance could not be otherwise than excellent. Miss Goddard and M. Ole Bull formed the principal attraction, and both were greatly applauded.—The last Academy Concert for the season took place at these Rooms on the 5th ult. The most striking feature of the programme was Hummel's Military Septuor for the Pianoforte, part of which was played in admirable style by Miss Beatrice Jenkins, a young lady who will doubtless take a high rank in the profession. Miss Bayly played Weber's Concert-stück with much cleverness. The singers were Mdles. Bramley, Armitage, Henderson, Spence, Westbrook, Robinson, and Flewitt; and Messrs. Wheeler, Wells, and Rudkin.—MADAME de Vaucheran's Concert took place on the 10th ult., on which occasion she selected Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata for her initiative essay; the violinist was Herr Hegar, from the Conservatoire at Leipzig, who is an excellent player. Madame Vaucheran delighted her audience with the neatness of her execution and her genuine feeling.

(Continued on page 91.)